

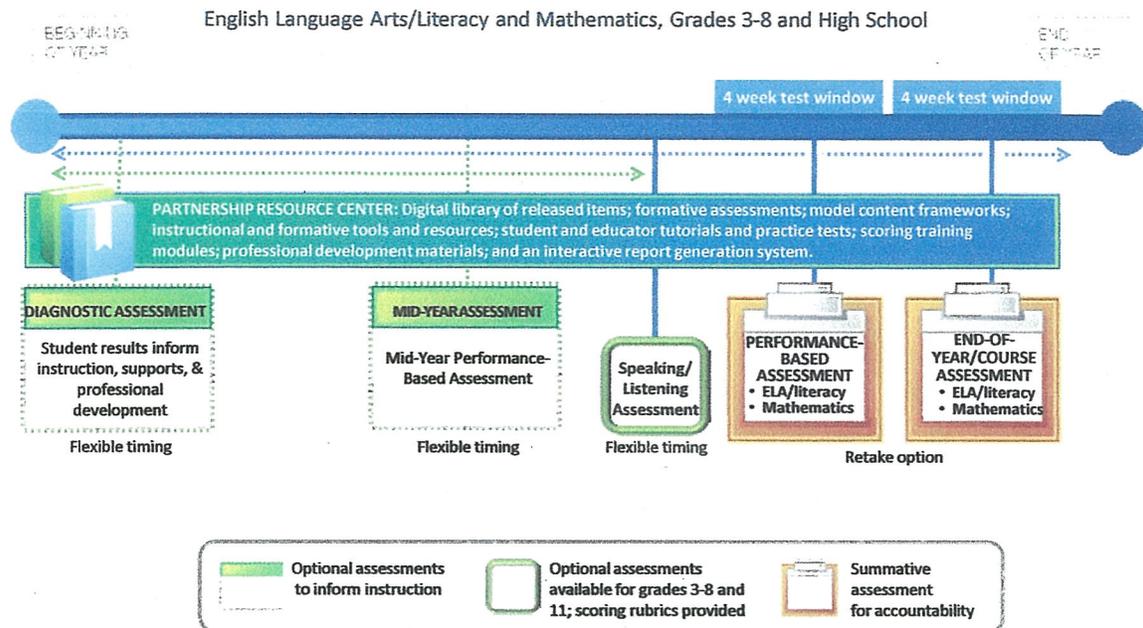


Handouts to accompany slide
show for elementary school
teachers about

*17 Facts Every ELA Educator
Should KNOW - Q & A*

10/8/14

The Partnership for the Assessment of Readiness for College and Careers (PARCC) #1



Description of Major PARCC Features

Partnership Resource Center: This digital library is due to launch in Fall 2014 and contain resources to support teachers and students in grades K–12, including formative embedded tasks for students in grades K–1, released items and tasks, an online reporting system, and Professional Learning Modules. Many of these resources will be contributed by member states.

Optional Assessment Components:

Mid-Year Performance Assessment: These extended formative tasks for grades 3–11 will provide teachers and students with instructionally useful feedback and prepare them for the summative performance tasks. A wide testing window will allow for alignment with local curricula. Tasks will focus on hard-to-measure standards and application of skills. Available in 2014-15

Diagnostic Assessment: Available for grades 2–8 in Fall 2015, these computer-adaptive assessments will provide timely, detailed information concerning student strengths and weaknesses in foundational concepts and skills to support targeted instruction and professional development.

Speaking and Listening Assessment: (*formerly required, now optional*) Available in 2015-16 for grades K-12, rubrics will be provided for local scoring.

Summative Assessment: PARCC will provide summative assessments for grades 3 – 11 that have a Performance-Based Assessment and an End-of-Year Assessment, each of which has a testing window of 20 school days. Total testing time for ELA/literacy and mathematics, across 9 testing sessions, is expected to be 9¾ hours testing time for third grade, 10 hours for grades 4-5 , 10¾ hours for grades 6-8 and 11 to 11¼ hours for grades 9-12.

Performance-Based Assessment: Students will complete 3 ELA/literacy tasks (1 literary analysis task, 1 narrative task, 1 research simulation task) and two or more math tasks that involve complex, real-world problems.

End-of-Year Assessment: This assessment will be computer-based and consist of innovative, machine-scorable item types. *High School:* In mathematics, both traditional and integrated math sequences will be supported; in ELA, literacy skills in ELA, science and social studies will be assessed, as in the Common Core.

Accountability: Scores for the Performance-Based Assessment and End-of-Year Assessment will be combined for the student’s annual accountability score. Subject to state decisions, PARCC will make available one retake for students in grades 3–8 and up to three retakes for high school students.

Implementation: Field testing completed in 2013–2014; Summative and Mid-Year assessments operational in 2014-15. Diagnostic, Speaking & Listening, and K-1 formative assessments ready in 2015-16.

Cost: \$24 per student per year for all summative assessments, delivered and scored, in ELA/literacy and mathematics. Price of optional components has not yet been announced.



Register for Great Books close reading courses!

Great Books professional learning courses include **Using Shared Inquiry with Nonfiction**, a one-day live course, and **The Close Reading Process**, a 90-minute webinar. Both courses develop students' reading comprehension of informational texts. In both the live course and the webinar, teachers will learn how to:

- Deepen students' engagement with texts and promote critical thinking
- Identify students' needs and learn strategies to meet them
- Work through concrete steps that help students manage difficult texts
- Learn how to use the Shared Inquiry method with nonfiction texts

Great Books Core Professional Learning Courses

Learn Shared Inquiry and qualify to lead Great Books K-12 programs in the classroom! Our core professional learning course is offered as either a two-day live or one-day blended live and online course. Click here to see courses scheduled in your area.

Register for Other Great Books Webinars

We offer a variety of convenient and cost-effective webinars, including:

- Reading Comprehension Strategies
- Shared Inquiry Review
- The Power of Student Questions
- Volunteer Leader Training

More Resources

Download a **free** Great Books lesson plan for your grade level!



11 Tips to Turn Every Student Into a Close Reader

By Samantha Cleaver

Let's face it, close reading isn't often a skill that comes naturally. When our students get a new reading assignment, their first instinct is often to race to the finish line rather than engage deeply with a text.

Getting students to slow down, engage with the text in different ways, and reflect as they read are challenges for every teacher, and are the goals of close reading. They're also at the heart of the Common Core English Language Arts standards. There's no magic way to turn your class into top-notch readers overnight, but there are specific close reading skills you can teach that will help your students now and down the line.

In Harlem, NY, Mark Gillingham, senior researcher with the Great Books Foundation, watches a group of seventh-grade students reading aloud "The White Umbrella." At one moment the narration becomes unclear and the students begin debating which character is actually speaking. Their genuine interest in figuring out who is speaking drives them to read, reread, and discuss the section. "This close reading of text that leads to authentic discussion is what the Great Books Foundation wants to cultivate in ALL readers," says Gillingham.



The key is learning how to annotate effectively. "When students are drawing conclusions as they annotate their texts, they're using high level reading comprehension skills," says Linda Barrett, senior training consultant with the Great Books Foundation. "As their annotation improves, students may begin marking the points when a character makes a decision or when an author uses a specific literary tool."

Nurturing these higher-level skills takes time and many different techniques. You can begin to strengthen close reading in your classroom with these eleven expert tips.

1. Be a Close Reader Yourself

As you teach close reading, it's important that you know the text backwards and forwards. Every time you raise an issue or ask a question for discussion (e.g. "How do we know that Macbeth feels guilty?"), you'll know how to help your students find the textual evidence and where it's located in the text. Modeling close reading through your class discussion is as important as direct instruction in close reading.

2. Teach "Stretch Texts"

The purpose for having students learn close reading skills, says Gillingham, is to enable them to read increasingly complex texts over time. As you choose texts to use with your students, think about your purpose behind each text. Look for stories or articles that raise authentic questions and could be interpreted differently depending on each student's background knowledge or prior reading. If you're working with a novel, focus on a section that lends itself to ambiguity and interpretation. And be sure to occasionally assign "stretch texts" in class. These are texts that you wouldn't expect students to read independently, such as a critical essay or short piece of philosophy. "It's a text that's meant to be difficult," says Gillingham, "and may require up to a week of study."

3. Teach Students to Look for the Evidence

If your students leave your class understanding how to provide evidence from the text, consider your year an unqualified success. It's the most central skill of the Common Core standards, says Elfreida Hiebert, president and CEO of Text Project. "The Common Core," says Hiebert, "focuses our attention on what content the text is helping us gain." Push students to go beyond recounting facts and plot points. As you're planning, think about what higher order questions you can ask in class discussion and written assignments.

4. Always Set a Purpose for Reading

After your students have read a text through once, help them dig deeper by setting a specific purpose for reading it again. That purpose could be to track a concept or theme, or to analyze how an author uses a literary element or creates tone. Giving students something specific to focus on requires that they return to the text and really focus.

5. Differentiate Your Instruction

Even if students aren't able to close read a novel independently, they can still apply strategies to a passage. Students may listen to an oral reading of the text, work in a small group with teacher support, or work with a partner to reread a text and prepare for discussion. If the majority of your class is not ready for independent close reading, keep in mind that the overarching idea is to get students to think about different ways that people can interpret text and build their own arguments around text, which can be done with picture books or read alouds as well as novels and short stories.



6. Focus on Making Connections

Rather than asking students a myriad of comprehension questions, focus their reading experiences around connecting with and remembering the text. Plan and ask questions that help you understand if students understand the text, and where they need to dig deeper into the big ideas. Hiebert suggests focusing on how the text relates to what the student has previously read, and what else they might learn about the topic after reading this selection.

7. Model it First

If students are new to close reading, spend time modeling how to think about a prompt and how to annotate the text. You might want to use a document camera to project pages of the text and read through and annotate a passage around a central question, modeling your thinking. After you do a few pages, release the work to students and have them take the lead.

8. Let Them Make Mistakes

If some of your students have clearly misinterpreted the text, ask them to explain their thinking or help you see the connection they've made. This gives them a great opportunity to practice finding textual evidence. Students may also chime in with other interpretations. The important thing is that students clarify and refine their thinking strategies, not that everyone has the same "right" answer.

9. Close Read Across the Curriculum

Once students are familiar with close reading in one content area, expand the process to other texts and content areas. Close reading can happen in science, social studies, math, and other subjects. Students can spend time delving into charts and graphs in science, discussing a math concept, or working to truly understand the various interpretations of a speech in social studies.

10. Use Student Questions to Drive Discussion

Here's one technique to consider. During Great Books discussions, teachers start by compiling student and teacher questions that come from the text. Once the questions are compiled in a list, the teacher supports the students in reviewing all the questions, identifying ones that are similar and answering some of the factual questions that only require a short answer. Together, the class discusses the questions and decides which are the most interesting and worthy of further exploration. This is a great way to help your students learn to ask higher-order questions and to write good thesis statements.

11. Listen to Your Students

Along with close reading the text, you need to close read your students. When you begin to let students' questions and ideas about the text take the lead, you'll find your class will be much more invested in the reading. Your role will be to keep them grounded to the close reading process. If a student makes an assertion, can the class find the textual evidence for it? If not, why not? Is a new theory needed? As you probe into your students' questions, you'll learn more about where your students are and give them opportunities to engage deeper with the text. Ultimately, says Gillingham, "you are learning everything you can from your students."

A Guide to Creating Text Dependent Questions for Close Analytic Reading

Text Dependent Questions: What Are They?

The Common Core State Standards for reading strongly focus on students gathering evidence, knowledge, and insight from what they read. Indeed, eighty to ninety percent of the Reading Standards in each grade *require* text dependent analysis; accordingly, aligned curriculum materials should have a similar percentage of text dependent questions.

As the name suggests, a text dependent question specifically asks a question that can only be answered by referring explicitly back to the text being read. It does not rely on any particular background information extraneous to the text nor depend on students having other experiences or knowledge; instead it privileges the text itself and what students can extract from what is before them.

For example, in a close analytic reading of Lincoln's "Gettysburg Address," the following would not be text dependent questions:

- *Why did the North fight the civil war?*
- *Have you ever been to a funeral or gravesite?*
- *Lincoln says that the nation is dedicated to the proposition that "all men are created equal." Why is equality an important value to promote?*

The overarching problem with these questions is that they require no familiarity at all with Lincoln's speech in order to answer them. Responding to these sorts of questions instead requires students to go outside the text. Such questions can be tempting to ask because they are likely to get students talking, but they take students away from considering the actual point Lincoln is making. They seek to elicit a personal or general response that relies on individual experience and opinion, and answering them will not move students closer to understanding the text of the "Gettysburg Address."

Good text dependent questions will often linger over specific phrases and sentences to ensure careful comprehension of the text—they help students see something worthwhile that they would not have seen on a more cursory reading. Typical text dependent questions ask students to perform one or more of the following tasks:

- Analyze paragraphs on a sentence by sentence basis and sentences on a word by word basis to determine the role played by individual paragraphs, sentences, phrases, or words
- Investigate how meaning can be altered by changing key words and why an author may have chosen one word over another
- Probe each argument in persuasive text, each idea in informational text, each key detail in literary text, and observe how these build to a whole
- Examine how shifts in the direction of an argument or explanation are achieved and the impact of those shifts
- Question why authors choose to begin and end when they do
- Note and assess patterns of writing and what they achieve
- Consider what the text leaves uncertain or unstated

Creating Text-Dependent Questions for Close Analytic Reading of Texts

An effective set of text dependent questions delves systematically into a text to guide students in extracting the key meanings or ideas found there. They typically begin by exploring specific words, details, and arguments and then moves on to examine the impact of those specifics on the text as a whole. Along the way they target academic vocabulary and specific sentence structures as critical focus points for gaining comprehension.

While there is no set process for generating a complete and coherent body of text dependent questions for a text, the following process is a good guide that can serve to generate a core series of questions for close reading of any given text.

Step One: Identify the Core Understandings and Key Ideas of the Text

As in any good reverse engineering or “backwards design” process, teachers should start by identifying the key insights they want students to understand from the text—keeping one eye on the major points being made is crucial for fashioning an overarching set of successful questions and critical for creating an appropriate culminating assignment.

Step Two: Start Small to Build Confidence

The opening questions should be ones that help orientate students to the text and be sufficiently specific enough for them to answer so that they gain confidence to tackle more difficult questions later on.

Step Three: Target Vocabulary and Text Structure

Locate key text structures and the most powerful academic words in the text that are connected to the key ideas and understandings, and craft questions that illuminate these connections.

Step Four: Tackle Tough Sections Head-on

Find the sections of the text that will present the greatest difficulty and craft questions that support students in mastering these sections (these could be sections with difficult syntax, particularly dense information, and tricky transitions or places that offer a variety of possible inferences).

Step Five: Create Coherent Sequences of Text Dependent Questions

The sequence of questions should not be random but should build toward more coherent understanding and analysis to ensure that students learn to stay focused on the text to bring them to a gradual understanding of its meaning.

Step Six: Identify the Standards That Are Being Addressed

Take stock of what standards are being addressed in the series of questions and decide if any other standards are suited to being a focus for this text (forming additional questions that exercise those standards).

Step Seven: Create the Culminating Assessment

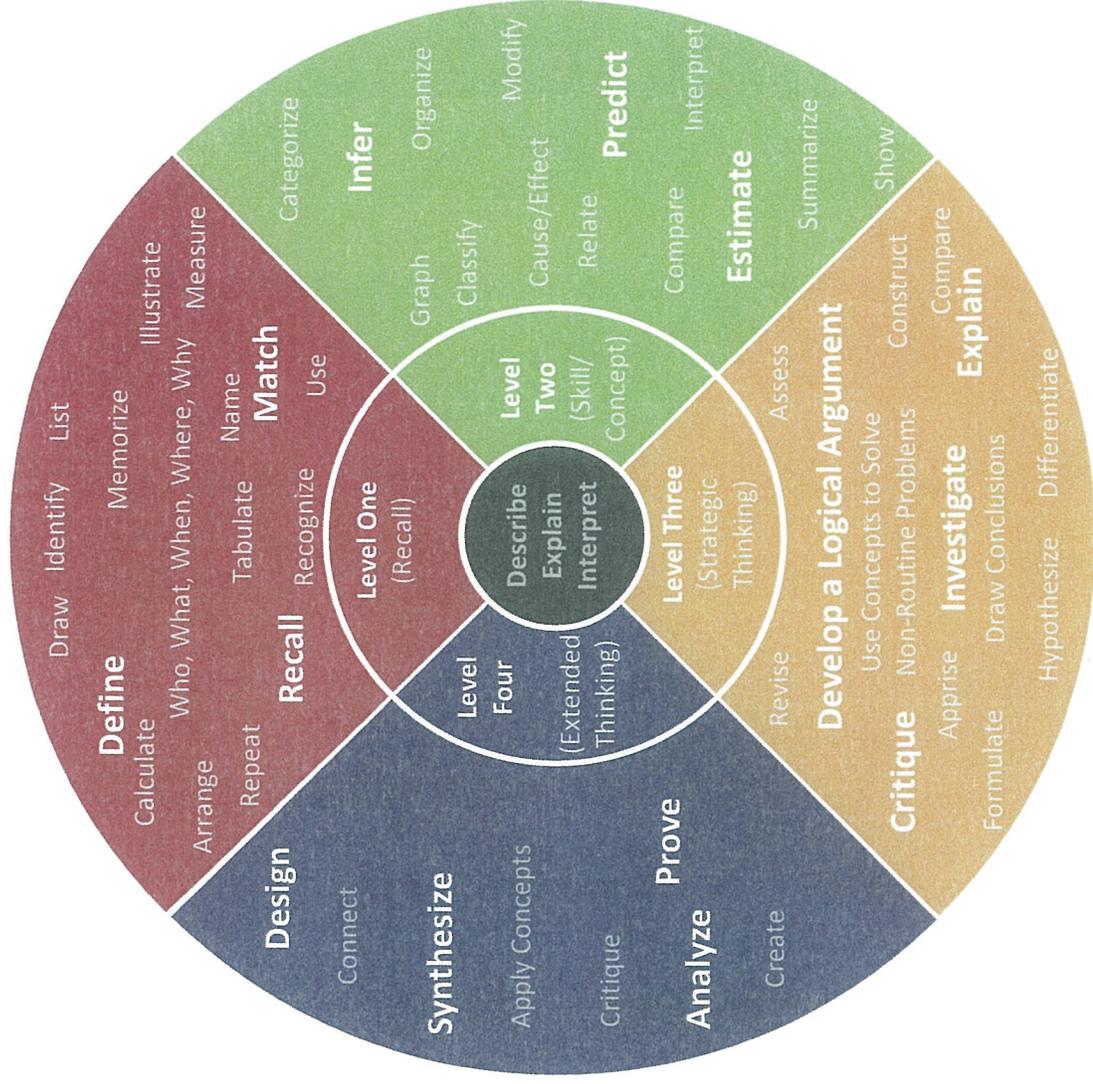
Develop a culminating activity around the key ideas or understandings identified earlier that reflects (a) mastery of one or more of the standards, (b) involves writing, and (c) is structured to be completed by students independently.

Assessing Higher-Level Thinking Skills

The Depth-of-Knowledge Levels web is one widely used method for illustrating the various types of knowledge and skills that teaching and learning encompasses.

The level of thinking becomes more demanding as one moves to the higher levels and tackles more complex tasks such as synthesizing multiple pieces of information or proving an idea based on evidence in a text.

Students especially need level three and four skills to succeed in college and careers. The Common Core standards reflect these skills more strongly than most state tests.



#4

#5

On-the-Spot Scaffolding for Students

SEPTEMBER 30, 2014

Rebecca Alber
Edutopia Consulting Online Editor

Scrambling in the moment to figure out what students need when they *just don't get it* is one of the exciting challenges of teaching. Being able to respond to learners' needs on the spot is hands down one of the greatest tricks of this trade.

And when lesson planning, we can't always guess how many steps we will need to break a lesson into and how much support will be needed for each chunk. I know I've made assumptions about what students will "get" and then in the middle of the lesson, I've had to stop, think on my feet, and add something to help move the learning forward.

Just to be clear: Scaffolding a lesson and differentiating instruction are two different things. Scaffolding is breaking up the learning into chunks and then providing a tool, or structure, with each chunk. When scaffolding reading, for example, you might preview the text and discuss key vocabulary, or chunk the text and read and stop and discuss as you go. With differentiation, you may give a child an entirely different piece of text to read, you might shorten the text or alter it, and you may modify the writing assignment that follows.

Simply put, scaffolding is what you do first with kids, then for those students who are still struggling, you may need to differentiate by modifying an assignment and/or making accommodations for a student (for example, choose more accessible text and/or assign an alternative project).

3 Scaffolding Strategies

On-the-spot scaffolding and differentiating are essential skills for teachers. And the longer you teach, the better

you become at both.

So when do we do it? Well, if we get The Look from students (a distant stare, a furrowed brow) this means it's time to stop, check for understanding by asking questions or in some other way, and then review. If that doesn't work, we need to add a step -- bolster what has already been shared by adding something more.

Here's some ideas to consider when the learners in the midst of a lesson need a little extra something:

Idea #1: Sentence starters. These writing training wheels work wonders for any struggling writer, whether elementary or secondary school students (heck, I use them with university students). So if a student is sitting there and says with words (or simply with a look) "I don't know what to write," take your pencil and write a few words out with a line that follows. Here's examples: "One thing I don't understand about the civil war is ____," "People disagree about this issue because ____," "Something important to know about photosynthesis is ____." If many students are struggling to get started with a writing task, create a few sentence starters on the white board for all to see.

Idea #2: Use an image or short film clip. In the middle of a lesson, when the thinking is stuck in the room, I've jumped online to find a short film clip or a photo. One example is a time we read about and discussed McCarthyism and my eleventh grade students needed more to really get it. I quickly went online and found and projected a few anti-communism propaganda advertisements. These over-the-top messages really made the hysteria surrounding this era (<http://www.kuriositas.com/2013/10/the-red-menace-anti-communist.html>) come to life for them. After that, our discussion deepened and so did their questions about McCarthyism and The Cold War.

Using visuals for on-the-spot scaffolding (for an individual student or for the group) is unquestionably a best practice. Research shows that the population is made up of 65 percent visual learners. And only 10 percent of students are auditory learners yet 80 percent of instruction is delivered orally (University of Illinois, 2009).

Idea #3: Give them time to talk with a guiding question. Never underestimate giving students time to talk. As learners, we need to make sense of what is coming at us -- new information, new ideas, and concepts. If you see The Look from many, stop the lesson and invite students to engage in low stakes discussion with each other and focus it on a guiding question. The question can be framed, for example, so as to clarify the information they've already received or to compare or to connect the new information to what they already know. For example, "If someone were to walk into this room right now, how would you explain McCarthyism?" Or, "What does McCarthyism remind you of? In what ways is it different (or the same) in government/politics today?"

How do you on-the-spot scaffold? What tools and tips do you have worked well with students? Please share in the comments section below.

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#6

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Marilee Sprenger (/)

Onsite Professional Development

Search

The Critical Words Your Students Must Know for the Common Core State Standards!

Researchers estimate 85% of achievement test scores are based on the vocabulary of the standards. Students from poverty, ELL students, and other at-risk students are particularly in need of learning these words in ways that meet their specific learning needs.

Below are the high frequency words of the CCSS and words present in the exemplars provided in Appendix B.

[Critical Verbs](#)

[Critical Nouns](#)

Analyze

Articulate

Cite

Compare

Comprehend

Contrast

Delineate

Demonstrate

Describe

Determine

Develop

Distinguish

Draw

Evaluate

Explain

Identify

Infer

Integrate

Alliteration

Analogy

Argument

Central Idea

Conclusions

Connections

Connotative Language

Details

Evidence

Figurative Language

Illustrations

Interaction

Metaphor

Mood

Point of view

Rhetoric

Simile

Stanza

Structures

Interpret

Theme

Locate

Tone

Organize

Paraphrase

Refer

Retell

Suggest

Support

Summarize

Synthesize

Trace

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GRADE 3
CONDENSED SCORING RUBRIC FOR PROSE CONSTRUCTED RESPONSE ITEMS
(Revised July 29, 2014)*

Research Simulation Task (RST) and Literary Analysis Task (LAT)

| Construct Measured | Score Point 3 | Score Point 2 | Score Point 1 | Score Point 0 |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Reading Comprehension of Key Ideas and Details | The student response demonstrates full comprehension by providing an accurate explanation/ description/comparison and by referencing the texts explicitly. | The student response demonstrates comprehension by providing a mostly accurate explanation/ description/comparison and by referencing the text(s) explicitly. | The student response demonstrates limited comprehension and may reference the text(s) explicitly. | The student response does not demonstrate comprehension of the text(s). |
| Writing Written Expression | The student response <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • addresses the prompt and provides effective development of the topic that is consistently appropriate to the task by using clear reasoning and relevant, text-based evidence; • consistently demonstrates purposeful and controlled organization; • uses language to express ideas with clarity. | The student response <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • addresses the prompt and provides some development of the topic that is generally appropriate to the task by using reasoning and relevant, text-based evidence; • generally demonstrates purposeful and controlled organization; • uses language to express ideas with some clarity. | The student response <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • addresses the prompt and provides minimal development of the topic that is limited in its appropriateness to the task by using limited reasoning and text-based evidence; or • is a developed, text-based response with little or no awareness of the prompt; • demonstrates purposeful organization that sometimes is not controlled; • uses language to express ideas with limited clarity. | The student response <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • is undeveloped and/or inappropriate to the task; • demonstrates little or no organization; • does not use language to express ideas with clarity. |
| Writing Knowledge of Language and Conventions | The student response to the prompt demonstrates full command of the conventions of standard English at an appropriate level of complexity. There may be a few minor errors in mechanics, grammar, and usage, but meaning is clear . | The student response to the prompt demonstrates some command of the conventions of standard English at an appropriate level of complexity. There may be errors in mechanics, grammar, and usage that occasionally impede understanding , but the meaning is generally clear. | The student response to the prompt demonstrates limited command of the conventions of standard English at an appropriate level of complexity. There may be errors in mechanics, grammar, and usage that often impede understanding . | The student response to the prompt demonstrates no command of the conventions of standard English. Frequent and varied errors in mechanics, grammar, and usage impede understanding . |

#8

GRADE 3
CONDENSED SCORING RUBRIC FOR PROSE CONSTRUCTED RESPONSE ITEMS
(Revised July 29, 2014)*

Narrative Task (NT)

| Construct Measured | Score Point 3 | Score Point 2 | Score Point 1 | Score Point 0 |
|--|--|--|---|--|
| Writing Written Expression | <p>The student response</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> is effectively developed with narrative elements and is consistently appropriate to the task; consistently demonstrates purposeful and controlled organization; uses language to express ideas with clarity. | <p>The student response</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> is developed with some narrative elements and is generally appropriate to the task; demonstrates purposeful and controlled organization; uses language to express ideas with some clarity. | <p>The student response</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> is minimally developed with few narrative elements and is limited in its appropriateness to the task; demonstrates purposeful organization that sometimes is not controlled; uses language to express ideas with limited clarity. | <p>The student response</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> is undeveloped and/or inappropriate to the task; demonstrates little or no organization; does not use language to express ideas with clarity. |
| Writing Knowledge of Language and Conventions | <p>The student response to the prompt demonstrates full command of the conventions of standard English at an appropriate level of complexity. There may be a few minor errors in mechanics, grammar, and usage, but meaning is clear.</p> | <p>The student response to the prompt demonstrates some command of the conventions of standard English at an appropriate level of complexity. There may be errors in mechanics, grammar, and usage that occasionally impede understanding, but the meaning is generally clear.</p> | <p>The student response to the prompt demonstrates limited command of the conventions of standard English at an appropriate level of complexity. There may be errors in mechanics, grammar, and usage that often impede understanding.</p> | <p>The student response to the prompt demonstrates no command of the conventions of standard English. Frequent and varied errors in mechanics, grammar, and usage impede understanding.</p> |

- NOTE:
- The reading dimension is not scored for elicited narrative stories.
 - Per the CCSS, narrative elements in grades 3-5 may include: establishing a situation, organizing a logical event sequence, describing scenes, objects or people, developing characters personalities, and using dialogue as appropriate.
 - The elements of organization to be assessed are expressed in the grade-level standards W1-W3.

A response is considered unscorable if it cannot be assigned a score based on the rubric criteria. For unscorable student responses, one of the following condition codes will be applied.

Coded Responses:

- A=No response
- B=Response is unintelligible or undecipherable
- C=Response is not written in English
- D=Off-topic
- E=Refusal to respond
- F=Don't understand/know

* This rubric is subject to further refinement based on research and study.

GRADES 4 AND 5
CONDENSED SCORING RUBRIC FOR PROSE CONSTRUCTED RESPONSE ITEMS
(Revised July 29, 2014)*

Research Simulation Task (RST) and Literary Analysis Task (LAT)

| Construct Measured | Score Point 3 | Score Point 2 | Score Point 1 | Score Point 0 |
|---|---|--|---|--|
| Reading Comprehension of Key Ideas and Details | The student response demonstrates full comprehension of ideas stated explicitly and inferentially by providing an accurate analysis and supporting the analysis with effective textual evidence. | The student response demonstrates comprehension of ideas stated explicitly and/or inferentially by providing a mostly accurate analysis and supporting the analysis with adequate textual evidence. | The student response demonstrates limited comprehension of ideas by providing a minimally accurate analysis and supporting the analysis with limited textual evidence. | The student response demonstrates no comprehension of ideas by providing inaccurate or no analysis and little to no textual evidence. |
| Writing Written Expression | The student response <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • addresses the prompt and provides effective development of the topic that is consistently appropriate to the task by using clear reasoning and relevant, text-based evidence; • demonstrates effective coherence, clarity, and cohesion appropriate to the task; • uses language effectively to clarify ideas, attending to the norms and conventions of the discipline. | The student response <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • addresses the prompt and provides some development of the topic that is generally appropriate to the task by using reasoning and relevant, text-based evidence; • demonstrates coherence, clarity, and cohesion appropriate to the task; • uses language to clarify ideas, attending to the norms and conventions of the discipline. | The student response <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • addresses the prompt and provides minimal development of the topic that is limited in its appropriateness to the task by using limited reasoning and text-based evidence; <i>or</i> • is a developed, text-based response with little or no awareness of the prompt; • demonstrates limited coherence, clarity, and/or cohesion appropriate to the task; • uses language that demonstrates limited awareness of the norms of the discipline. | The student response <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • is undeveloped and/or inappropriate to the task; • lacks coherence, clarity, and cohesion; • uses language that demonstrates no clear awareness of the norms of the discipline. |
| Writing Knowledge of Language and Conventions | The student response to the prompt demonstrates full command of the conventions of standard English at an appropriate level of complexity. There may be a few minor errors in mechanics, grammar, and usage, but meaning is clear . | The student response to the prompt demonstrates some command of the conventions of standard English at an appropriate level of complexity. There may be errors in mechanics, grammar, and usage that occasionally impede understanding , but the meaning is generally clear . | The student response to the prompt demonstrates limited command of the conventions of standard English at an appropriate level of complexity. There may be errors in mechanics, grammar, and usage that often impede understanding . | The student response to the prompt demonstrates no command of the conventions of standard English. Frequent and varied errors in mechanics, grammar, and usage impede understanding . |

#10

GRADES 4 AND 5
CONDENSED SCORING RUBRIC FOR PROSE CONSTRUCTED RESPONSE ITEMS
(Revised July 29, 2014)*

Narrative Task (NT)

| Construct Measured | Score Point 3 | Score Point 2 | Score Point 1 | Score Point 0 |
|--|--|--|--|--|
| Writing Written Expression | <p>The student response</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • is effectively developed with narrative elements and is consistently appropriate to the task; • demonstrates effective coherence, clarity, and cohesion appropriate to the task; • uses language effectively to clarify ideas, attending to the norms and conventions of the discipline. | <p>The student response</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • is developed with some narrative elements and is generally appropriate to the task; • demonstrates coherence, clarity, and cohesion appropriate to the task; • uses language to clarify ideas, attending to the norms and conventions of the discipline. | <p>The student response</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • is minimally developed with few narrative elements and is limited in its appropriateness to the task; • demonstrates limited coherence, clarity, and/or cohesion appropriate to the task; • uses language that demonstrates limited awareness of the norms of the discipline. | <p>The student response</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • is undeveloped and/or inappropriate to the task; • lacks coherence, clarity, and cohesion; • use of language demonstrates no clear awareness of the norms of the discipline. |
| Writing Knowledge of Language and Conventions | <p>The student response to the prompt demonstrates full command of the conventions of standard English at an appropriate level of complexity. There may be a few minor errors in mechanics, grammar, and usage, but meaning is clear.</p> | <p>The student response to the prompt demonstrates some command of the conventions of standard English at an appropriate level of complexity. There may be errors in mechanics, grammar, and usage that occasionally impede understanding, but the meaning is generally clear.</p> | <p>The student response to the prompt demonstrates limited command of the conventions of standard English at an appropriate level of complexity. There may be errors in mechanics, grammar, and usage that often impede understanding.</p> | <p>The student response to the prompt demonstrates no command of the conventions of standard English. Frequent and varied errors in mechanics, grammar, and usage impede understanding.</p> |

NOTE:

- The reading dimension is not scored for elicited narrative stories.
- Per the CCSS, narrative elements in grades 3-5 may include: establishing a situation, organizing a logical event sequence, describing scenes, objects or people, developing characters personalities, and using dialogue as appropriate.
- The elements of organization to be assessed are expressed in the grade-level standards W1-W3.

A response is considered unscorable if it cannot be assigned a score based on the rubric criteria. For unscorable student responses, one of the following condition codes will be applied.

Coded Responses:

- A=No response
- B=Response is unintelligible or undecipherable
- C=Response is not written in English
- D=Off-topic
- E=Refusal to respond
- F=Don't understand/know

* This rubric is subject to further refinement based on research and study.

11



Grade 3 Sample Items –Passage #1

Today you will research two people who lived long ago. As you read these passages, you will gather information and answer questions. Then you will write an article for your school newspaper to teach your classmates about how these two people made a difference in America.

Read the excerpt from a book titled *Eliza's Cherry Trees: Japan's Gift to America* about a young woman who lived in Washington, D.C., in the 1800s. Then answer the questions.

Excerpt from *Eliza's Cherry Trees: Japan's Gift to America*

By Andrea Zimmerman

- 1 When she was twenty-six, Eliza bought tickets to faraway Alaska. Few tourists had ever been there. Eliza wrote reports for the newspapers back home. She loved sharing the fascinating things she saw, such as huge glaciers, spouting whales, and the native people. Eliza even wrote a book—the first guidebook about Alaska.
- 2 When Eliza went back to Washington, it wasn't long before she started thinking about traveling again. She decided to visit her older brother, who was working in Japan. Eliza sailed across the ocean.
- 3 In Japan, she rode on trains, carriages, and bumpy rickshaws. She climbed mountains, ate strange foods, and visited ancient temples. Everything was so different! She studied Japanese art and learned to speak Japanese. She fell in love with Japan and its people.
- 4 Eliza especially loved Japanese gardens. Eliza's favorite plants, by far, were the Japanese cherry trees. Eliza called them "the most beautiful thing in the world." Thousands of the trees were planted in parks and along the riverbanks. When they bloomed, the trees



became clouds of pink blossoms. As the petals drifted down, it was like pink snowfall. The Japanese people loved the cherry trees as their national symbol. Crowds gathered for picnics under the trees. People wrote poems and painted pictures to honor those *sakura*.

- 5 When Eliza came back home, she wrote a book about Japan. She wanted to share her love of Japan with other Americans. She wanted the nations of Japan and America to be friends.
- 6 Even though she was always thinking about her next journey, Eliza loved coming home to Washington, D.C. She was proud of America's growing capital and wanted it to look as beautiful as any city in the world.
- 7 She thought about the muddy land from a recent construction project in the swampy area around the riverbank. Eliza had a wonderful idea. She remembered the beautiful cherry trees in Japan. She thought, "That's what Washington needs!"
- 8 Eliza told the man in charge of the Washington parks about the wonderful cherry trees. She showed him photographs that she had taken. She told him about her plan to plant hundreds of cherry trees down by the water. He said no. He believed that they didn't need any different kind of tree in Washington.
- 9 But Eliza knew that sometimes when you have a good idea, you have to keep trying. So she waited. When a new parks man was hired, she told him about her good idea. He, too, said no.
- 10 Eliza kept traveling. She also met with friends who loved to travel. Some of these friends had started the National Geographic Society. The society was for people who wanted to learn more about the world.
- 11 Eliza was the first woman to have an important job there, and she helped the society grow. She wrote many articles and books. Eliza made more trips to Japan, Alaska, and Europe, and she explored India, China, Russia, and Java, an island of Indonesia.
- 12 Eliza also became a photographer. Not many women did that, either. She took pictures for the Smithsonian Institution and recorded people and places that Americans had never seen.



- 13 But Eliza didn't forget about the cherry trees, and she didn't give up. She kept trying for more than twenty years! Every time a new man was hired to be in charge of the parks department, Eliza went to tell him about her idea. Each one said no.
- 14 In 1909, William Howard Taft had just been elected president. Eliza had another good idea. She knew that sometimes people in politics could help get things done. She wrote a letter to the president's wife, Mrs. Taft. Eliza told Mrs. Taft about her plan to make Washington more beautiful with the lovely cherry trees. She was afraid the answer would be no again.
- 15 But Mrs. Taft loved the idea! With the help of Mr. Takamine, a generous Japanese scientist, they had the trees sent from Japan.
- 16 Everyone was happily waiting for the trees to arrive. Eliza imagined the beautiful pink clouds of blossoms that would soon be blooming in Washington.
- 17 In January of 1910, two thousand cherry trees arrived. They were given as a gift from Japan's capital city, Tokyo. But there was a problem. The trees had diseases and bugs. The inspectors were afraid they would make American trees sick. The president agreed. He signed an order for all the cherry trees to be burned to ashes.
- 18 Eliza was so disappointed. She was also afraid that the Japanese people would be offended. But the mayor of Tokyo said they understood. He even joked about George Washington chopping down a cherry tree.
- 19 New trees were carefully grown in Japan. In March of 1912, three thousand new trees arrived. They were inspected and declared healthy!
- 20 On March 27, 1912, there was a small ceremony at the planting of the first two cherry trees. Eliza watched as her longtime dream was finally coming true.
- 21 Over the years, the trees grew, and every spring, they bloomed. People began gathering to enjoy them and to celebrate their beauty, just like in Japan. Eliza was happy to see how they helped turn Washington, D.C., into one of the most beautiful cities in the world.



Grade 5 Sample Items - Passage #1

Read the article titled "Life in the Limbs." Then answer the questions.

Life in the Limbs

by Heather Kaufman-Peters

1 Imagine stepping out your front door to find yourself 40 feet above the ground overlooking a dense forest and a winding stream. Instead of hopping on your bike, you grab the handles of your very own zipline and fly 1000 yards over a pond, landing safely on the far bank.

2 Sound crazy? Not to Jonathan Fair Oaks, who lives in a four-story tree house that he designed and built! In fact, as a tree house architect, Jonathan has built more than 380 custom tree houses across the United States.

3 Jonathan's love of tree-house living began when he was a kid. He started climbing trees when he was 10 years old, and he became an arborist (a person who cares for trees) in high school. He built his first tree house and lived in it while he was in college.

4 "It was delightful—like being on a ship because it moved with the wind," Jonathan says. "It was the most fun I ever had."

5 Designing unique tree houses may sound tough, but Jonathan says it's no sweat. "I let the trees decide the designs," he says. "Hardwoods such as oak, maple, or hickory make the best trees for houses—but I did once build a wonderful tree house in a crabapple tree."

6 "If you want a bigger tree house than the tree can support," he adds, "you can use braces. My tree house is in two trees—an oak and a fir—and has three posts to support the weight."

7 As a certified arborist, Jonathan tries to never harm the trees.

8 "I build a tree house so it helps the tree," he says. "The tree's center of gravity is at the top and the ends of its branches, so I build a house down at the center of the tree, which shifts the center of gravity and makes the tree more balanced."

9 Using a special drill bit, he attaches artificial limbs to the tree to support the tree house.

10 "The tree grows over the artificial limbs, and they become part of the tree," Jonathan says. "I suspend the house on the artificial limbs so it actually floats."

11 The tree house is not the only thing suspended in Jonathan's designs. His tree houses always have swings. "Swings are a great way to enjoy the tree," he explains. For live-in tree houses he installs porch swings, and for kids' tree houses he puts up monkey swings (a rope with a round seat).

12 Jonathan also likes tree houses that overlook streams or rivers and include stained-glass windows to catch the sun's rays. But the most fun tree house designs he ever constructed were inspired by a galaxy far, far away.

13 "I've done several Ewok Villages," he says, "with ziplines and bridges to other trees and rope swings. Those were fun to build!"

Here's some more about living in the limbs! Read this interview with tree house expert Pete Nelson.

WELCOME TO TREE-HOUSE SCHOOL

17 Hey, kids! Jack here. Feeling inspired to design your own tree house? Here's some advice from Pete Nelson, who runs TreeHouse Workshop, a treehouse-building school. He's built tree houses across the United States—and in far-away countries such as Japan and Morocco, too!

18 *Jack:* What would you include in your dream tree house?

19 *Pete:* It would have windows everywhere but enough wall space for a favorite painting or two and a shelf for books. It would have a comfortable bed with lots of pillows, a writing desk, and a comfortable reading chair with a good light. Maybe a coffee maker and a tiny sink. And maybe a tiny bathroom, too!

20 *Jack:* Do books or movies ever give your customers ideas?

21 *Pete:* We often get asked to recreate the tree house from *The Swiss Family Robinson*.

22 *Jack:* How do you determine the

14 When designing a tree house, the sky's the limit according to Jonathan.

15 "Let your imagination run wild," he says. "Walk in the woods and learn the different trees. Spend time climbing and learn how to do it safely."

16 Jonathan also encourages his clients to give their tree houses names. One of his favorite names is "Ups and Downs."

shape of a tree house?

23 *Pete:* The trees will **dictate** how a floor plan lays out. Often these are unusual shapes. My tree houses tend to be square because it is less expensive to build square. If someone has all the time in the world to design a tree house, then I would make it wacky and fun!

24 *Jack:* Any crazy extras to include?

25 *Pete:* I have added fun stuff like water balloon launchers!

26 *Jack:* Do you name your tree houses?

27 *Pete:* We name them all the time: "Babylon," "The Temple of the Blue Moon," "Trillium," "Solace," "Uppermost," and many more.

28 Now get busy and draw up plans for your own tree house!

